



# Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot

## *Oakland County, MI*

### BACKGROUND

Oakland County is located in southeastern Michigan immediately to the northwest of Detroit. The county has a long history of heavy industrial activity, particularly in the automotive industry. There are abandoned and contaminated sites in nearly every part of the county and over 70 closed landfills. In addition, the county contains 1,400 significant waterways and lakes, which contribute to five different regional watersheds. Many county households rely on private water systems and groundwater. Water quality and the reduction of runoff and groundwater contamination are major concerns for the county. Downsizing in the automotive industry continues to contribute to the economic distress of county residents. Fifty-one of the 61 local units of governments in the county include low-to-moderate income census tracts, and there are significant pockets of low-income and disadvantaged populations. The county seat of Pontiac has 27% of its residents living in poverty and an unemployment rate of 11%.

While there is some privately funded redevelopment activity in the county, the degree of contamination at many sites makes additional incentives essential to redevelopment. To that end, ten local governments in the county have formed, or are forming, Brownfields Redevelopment Authorities that have assisted in 20 redevelopment projects in recent years. The county has provided planning and economic development support for many of these projects. Under its current Brownfields Assessment Pilot, the county is conducting an inventory of brownfields. The county also is in the process of creating its own Brownfields Redevelopment Authority to provide redevelopment incentives.

### BCRLF OBJECTIVES

The county's goal is to facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of local brownfields in order to protect

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



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**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2002

**Amount:** \$1,000,000

**BCRLF Target Area:**  
Sites throughout Oakland  
County

#### Contacts:

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Region 5 Brownfields  
Coordinator  
(312) 886-2513

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
[www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields)

natural resources, create jobs in distressed communities, and assist in low-to-moderate income housing development. By creating a pool of funds that can provide gap financing for redevelopment of less desirable properties, the county hopes to attract additional private investments to further assist project success.

Under the BCRLF Pilot, each municipality in the county will be asked to submit sites for consideration. Sites will be

evaluated based on development potential, community impact, likelihood of success, effect on water quality, and other selection criteria. Special emphasis will be placed on Pontiac and distressed communities in the southern part of the county. The greatest needs of municipalities in the county are low-to-moderate income housing and revitalization of the older urban core communities.

## **FUND STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS**

Oakland County is the cooperative agreement recipient and will serve as the lead agency and fund manager. The Oakland County Facilities Maintenance and Operation Department will provide a site manager.

## **LEVERAGING OTHER RESOURCES**

Oakland County's economic development team works regularly with all available federal, state, and local incentive programs. The county offers technical assistance to downtown redevelopment programs for the 31 traditional town centers in the county. Oakland County will encourage municipalities to form Brownfields Redevelopment Authorities, which allows access to a number of redevelopment incentives, including tax increment financing; state tax credits, grants, and loans; Clean Michigan Bonds; and Clean Michigan Initiative funds.

*Use of BCRLF Pilot funds must be in accordance with CERCLA, and all CERCLA restrictions on use of funding also apply to BCRLF funds.*